

Date: 02/02/2011

Dear Honourable Minister Roxon;

I take this opportunity to express a personal opinion on the registration of OTDs in Australia.

I have been in Australia since January 2009, employed as the Colgate Chair for Rural, Remote and Indigenous Oral Health, in the School of Dentistry and Oral Health, Griffith University. I was appointed into the position after an extensive search within Australia and internationally.

I am a dentist and dental public health specialist from South Africa. I am a permanent resident in Australia.

I have currently limited registration for teaching and research.

This a brief personal submission and a plea to recognise the contribution and potential contribution I can bring to Australia, and to ease the stresses attached to retaining registration for OTDs in academic institutions.

I have been an academic for more than 15-years and involved in teaching and learning for more than 20-years. I am happy to have limited registration as I have no intention to move into a private practice career. As mentioned the bulk of my career has been as an academic, and initially after graduation in 1986 I worked in both the public and private sectors as a clinical dentist.

While the move from state to national registration must be commended, the uncertainties attached to this change was stressful. I was regularly concerned about my continued registration, the time frame limited registrations will be allowed, etc. This confusion remains. I feel pressured to sit the board examination for dentists, however my career is essentially in dental public health, and my clinical skills are mostly related to basic primary oral health care. I would need significant re-training in the more advanced dental clinical interventions (theoretically and practically) if I were to be expected to sit the board examination for full registration, something I do not require as my intention is to remain a dental public health academic.

The uncertainties attached to OTD registration is very stressful. We as a family have relocated more than 10,000 km to live in Australia, and we have no regrets, however our security regarding my registration to be able to work is crucial to our well-being.

I would like to recommend that OTDs who are happy with having limited registration be allowed to retain this registration, with no time limitation.

The link below shows my current responsibilities, etc., in Australia.

<http://www.griffith.edu.au/health/school-dentistry-oral-health/staff/professor-ratilal-laloo>

Best Wishes.

Yours in health

Ratilal

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